

**CITY OF LODI
INFORMAL INFORMATIONAL MEETING
"SHIRTSLEEVE" SESSION
CARNEGIE FORUM, 305 WEST PINE STREET
TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 16, 2004**

An Informal Informational Meeting ("Shirtsleeve" Session) of the Lodi City Council was held Tuesday, November 16, 2004, commencing at 7:05 a.m.

A. ROLL CALL

Present: Council Members – Beckman, Hitchcock (arrived at 7:07 a.m.), Howard, and Mayor Hansen

Absent: Council Members – Land

Also Present: Interim City Manager Keeter, City Attorney Schwabauer, and Deputy City Clerk Taylor

B. CITY COUNCIL CALENDAR UPDATE

Deputy City Clerk Taylor reviewed the weekly calendar (filed).

C. TOPIC(S)

C-1 "Electric Utility Department's proposed reorganization study"

With the aid of overheads (filed), Alan Vallow, Electric Utility Director, provided Council with information related to reorganizing the Electric Utility Department. He reported that in February 2004 Electric Utility staff recognized that a large number of retirements over the next two years will initiate a turnover in employment as promotions, new hires, and training takes place. Mr. Vallow stated that with the retirement of several senior personnel, Electric Utility will show a loss of job experience equaling 145 years in field services and 167 years in engineering and operations. It would be appropriate to review job descriptions and classifications of these positions to determine if they best meet the needs of the department prior to promoting and recruiting personnel and return to Council with a proposal based on the results. In recent years, retirements have created vacancies and many of the assignments have been picked up by internal staff members. In addition, many of the more complex duties have been assigned to professional consultants sharing their expertise with current staff, and through the support of the Northern California Power Agency (NCPA). Mr. Vallow did not recommend at this time that \$150,000 be spent for a consultant to analyze utility efficiency and to design an organizational model structure as was previously proposed. As a result of meetings with Jim Krueger, Finance Director, Mr. Vallow reported that crossover in the performance of financial reporting and other duties in Finance and Electric Utility have further initiated interest in an internal review of organization structure. It is possible that combining functions and eliminating duplication of effort may save money for Electric Utility and the General Fund. Mr. Vallow additionally shared that staff expects the technical services area to grow at a rate twice that of other areas within Electric Utility and the department is currently implementing a three-year plan to develop skill sets to prepare for telecommunications and fiber optic technology.

In answer to Mayor Hansen, Mr. Vallow explained that positions will be filled from within the department whenever possible. Reflecting current skill sets, most individuals qualified for these specialized positions are working as consultants or for agencies such as NCPA. In these circumstances, the intent is to disseminate duties of retiring personnel among existing staff and then reclassify vacated positions to better meet the needs of the current organization before the recruitment process is initiated.

In response to Council Member Howard, Interim City Manager Keeter shared that, while the City currently has 25 vacant positions in the general fund due to a hiring freeze, Electric Utility is an enterprise, which has the ability to fill vacancies. She also reported that the current and impending vacancies provide Electric Utility an opportunity to restructure positions and tasks, but it will take time to write job classifications and reclassifications in addition to the recruitment process.

In answer to Council Member Hitchcock, Mr. Vallow stated that the Finance Department has the role of financial reporting, meeting the special needs of Electric Utility, including rates analysis and routine bond issue reports. Duplication of effort is being explored and identified, and a transfer of utility funds to the general fund for services will be adjusted to appropriately reflect reimbursement for the performance of these duties. Additionally, a shift in workload may occur as duplication is eliminated and duties are reassigned to a more appropriate department.

D. COMMENTS BY THE PUBLIC ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS

None.

E. ADJOURNMENT

No action was taken by the City Council. The meeting was adjourned at 7:50 a.m.

ATTEST:

Jacqueline L. Taylor
Deputy City Clerk